

intuitive awareness of its nature. They are perfectly aware, that it is an intimate bodily relation of some kind. In the very beginning they undoubtedly think of it as on the lines of their own experiences and their phantasies, as father and mother giving each other good things to eat, or, as in the anal phase, father and mother putting excremental products into each other. The children's own genital excitements, which occur quite early in infancy, bring to them some sort of awareness that the genitals play a special part in this relation. The nature of the boy's organ as an instrument for penetration, with its corresponding impulses, leads him to seek the appropriate organ for satisfaction and to be intuitively aware that such organs exist. On the other hand, the girl's vaginal impulses influence her phantasy life directly, and give her an intuitive awareness of the appropriate organ of penetration. These intuitions and phantasies are nevertheless highly coloured by actual experiences, and by the physiological processes of eating, urinating and defaecating. Since his own experience of the genital is as a urinating organ, the child inevitably thinks of his parents' sexual relations also mainly in these terms.

In her paper, "Danger Situations of the Immature Ego,"¹ M. N. Searl has further elaborated certain fundamental aspects of the psychological situation of the child faced with this central emotional problem:

"The chief object of this paper is to show the importance of the relation between the ego and the id, a relation in which for safety the forces of the ego must predominate. It is scarcely necessary to say that this relation, to be in any way satisfactory, must be achieved by the strengthening of the ego, and not by the weakening of the id.³ So that it is certain

that for safety the complementary help must be what we may call 'ego' help. To put it in its simplest form, the mother does not suckle her child *for the sake of* the baby's libidinal pleasure, or her own libidinal pleasure, great as both will be in happy motherhood, but because of the baby's alimentary needs. That is, in all situations of importance, the ego attitude must predominate in the mother, and in lesser situations must be immediately ready to reassert itself on

¹ *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, Vol. X, 4, 1929.

² A convenient term used to designate the primary undifferentiated instinct-self, as a whole.